N. C. Department of Cultural Resources
Division of Archives and History
State Public Records Cataloging Services

Public Database Indexing Summary

A condensation of *Public Database Indexing: Guidelines and Recommendations*

September 1996

Contents

Introduction

The 1995 session of the North Carolina General Assembly amended the state public records law (North Carolina General Statute, chapter 132) to require the indexing of public databases at the state and local government levels according to the following schedule:

State agencies, by	July 1, 1996
Larger counties and municipalities, by	July 1, 1997
All other counties, municipalities, and public agencies, by	July 1, 1998

Public Database Indexing Summary represents a bare-bones approach to mandated database indexing. It is intended as a concise work-aid for those agency personnel already familiar with the contents of the longer, more comprehensive publication, *Public Database Indexing: Guidelines and Recommendations.* Both documents are accessible via the Internet at **http://www.spr.dcr.state.nc.us**. The longer document can also be requested as hard copy from SPRCS, the division's State Public Records Cataloging Services.

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Caution: Do not attempt indexing without first reviewing the comprehensive document, *Public Database Indexing: Guidelines and Recommendations.* Should you need assistance in resolving a particular indexing issue, please contact SPRCS staff.

Basic Database Indexing Information Elements

The following indexing elements (A through K) should be recorded for each database being indexed. Note that each element title (in **boldface**) is followed by a sample box containing a short-form instruction and an illustrative response to that instruction. The illustrative responses, indented and in **boldface**, are applicable to a Division of Archives and History database named ACON. (A second illustrative response for element "E" is based on a database named CREP.) Some responses have been truncated; see *Public Database Indexing: Guidelines and Recommendations* for the full documentation.

A. Title

> List the title of the database and, optionally, its acronym.
> **Archives and History Contacts (ACON)**

- Use the complete title of the database as it is most widely known. This title should serve to distinguish this database from all other databases owned by the agency.

B. Agency/Owner

> List the name of the agency, organization, section, branch, etc. that sets policy with regard to accessing this database.
> **Department of Cultural Resources/Division of Archives and History/ Director's Office**

- At minimum, record the name of the office or work unit at the specific level within the organization's hierarchy that has responsibility for the contents of the database—the office that is closest to the information.
- It is highly recommended that the full, hierarchical name of the owner be used. As per the example, such a name begins with the top level agency, followed by the immediate subdivision, followed by the next subdivision of the first, until the actual work unit is reached. Each name in the hierarchical chain is separated by a forward stroke ("/").

C. Database Abstract

> Provide a narrative description of the database, writing for a non-technical audience. Descriptions can be as long as 500 words.
> **ACON is a database containing "contact" information—names, titles, addresses, phone numbers, etc.—relating to individuals and groups associated with the division's public records management program. It is used as both a practical tool and sample database for the development of indexing standards.**
> *(Truncated. See Public Database Indexing: Guidelines and Recommendations)*

- The contents of this field should contain enough descriptive information for the reader to determine whether or not to seek further information about the database.

D. Database Update Frequency

List one of the following:
- Daily
- Weekly
- Bi-weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Semi-annually
- Yearly
- As needed
- Continuously
- Other (list)

As needed

E. Legal Constraints on Database Access

If this database contains data elements closed to the public, so note, optionally citing the pertinent North Carolina General Statute(s) or federal regulation(s). Otherwise, list "None."
None

- *Sample response based on database named CREP, containing closed fields:*

If this database contains data elements closed to the public, so note, optionally citing the pertinent North Carolina General Statute(s) or federal regulation(s). Otherwise, list "None."
North Carolina General Statute § 70.18 notes that "information concerning the nature and location of any archaeological resource, regardless of the ownership of the property, may be made available to the public under Chapter 132 of the North Carolina General Statutes or under any other provision of law unless the Department of Cultural Resources determines that the disclosures would create a risk of harm to such resources or to the site at which such resources are located."

Cultural Resources has determined that disclosure of information contained in three fields in the CREP site record would create such a risk. These fields, representing approximately 3% of the site information, are accordingly closed to public inspection: (1) UTM Zone (site location by UTM coordinates), (2) Directions to Site, and (3) Owner/Tenant Information.

F. Form(s) of Digital Copies of Database

For each digital form (tape, disk, cartridge, etc.) in which the database can be copied or reproduced using the agency's computer facilities, describe the technical format or presentation of data elements and records. (See also "G", below.)
All digital copies are generated as DOS files (typically, Microsoft DOS 4.20); each copy is represented by one file (which may be several megabytes in size). Files are provided on 1.44 Mb diskettes (IBM-PC compatible). *(truncated)*

G. Database Digital Copy Media and Costs List

For each digital form entered in "F" above, note specifications and costs.
Any DOS copy: 1.44 Mb 3-½" diskettes, 135 tracks/inch, $1.00/diskette.

H. Report Reproduction Cost List

For each available printed, plotted, or photographic database output format, list per-unit cost.
Standard 8-½ x 11" printer output (200 dpi): $0.15/page.

I. Custom Services Costs

If the agency volunteers to create or compile a record or report that does not otherwise exist, enter known applicable fee(s). Otherwise, enter "No custom services available."
Custom report preparation: $35.00/hr., to be billed in fifteen-minute increments, plus listed costs of digital and printed reproduction media.

J. List of Database Data Modules

List and identify pertinent database tables, files, spreadsheet worksheets, or similar modular units of data. A database may consist of a single data module or a collection of related data modules.
Contacts—The primary database table
Books—Contains address book list and descriptions
Do Not Touch—Operations only, stores "next available" integers and machine numbers
_T_States_—List of two-char. state/territorial postal codes and full names—user interface operation only

- Do <u>not</u> list tables, worksheets, etc. used in database maintenance (e.g., a temporary table generated as a result of database administration activities).

K. Annotated List of Fields (one list per data module)

For each pertinent module listed above, furnish a list of data fields (read also "columns"; "data elements") and, provide the following information for each:
- _Name:_ The name of the data field
- _Description:_ This information defines and describes the element, noting its purpose and any pertinent information on how the data is derived (optional).
- _Restricted Field Indicator:_ If the element is closed to public inspection by one or more state statutes or federal laws, so note. Optionally, append the string "(closed-" + {_citation(s)_} + ")" to the description, replacing {_citation(s)_} as described in the notes below. (The quotation marks around the strings should <u>not</u> be included in the actual documentation.)
See "Basic Indexing Table Layout for Sample Database: ACON"

- Notes on _Description_ in box above:
  The division highly recommends that this description be included, since it is often critical to the public's understanding of the information contained within the database.

  In most commercial database products, the description is created and stored in the data dictionary or table definition.

For certain fields in legacy databases, the description may neither exist nor be determinable, in which case "**(unknown)**" should be entered.

- Notes on _Restricted Field Indicator_ (citation formatting) in box above:
  Each citation should be written without spaces and prefixed by either "NCGS" (N. C. General Statutes) , "USC" (U.S. Code) or "CFR" (Code of Federal Regulations) as appropriate. Multiple citations are separated by semi-colons without spaces. Note also that a single hyphen is inserted between the word "closed" and the first or only citation.

  Formatted example: "(closed-NCGS170-2;NCGS170-18) "

- Generating an Annotated List of Fields Report

  A. If the database includes data dictionaries or table definitions and the capability to generate reports, the required annotated lists of fields can be generated upon user request via the database's dictionary/table standard report. This avoids the necessity of storing large volumes of paper, ensures the currency of information provided to the public, and encourages better database documentation practices. Preparation for generating "on-demand" field lists includes making certain that the dictionary/table definition entries are accurate and that closed fields are noted.

  B. Before an agency develops any software or procedures for reporting annotated fields, it is urged to review the more detailed reporting requirements of the division's "Advanced Indexing" guidelines (see Appendix I of _Public Database Indexing: Guidelines and Recommendations_).

Designation of Electronic Registration Officer

The comprehensive document, _Public Database Indexing: Guidelines and Recommendations_, contains a model form, "Public Electronics Records Officer Registration. " It is requested that agencies designate an Electronic Records Officer (ERO) and forward a completed copy of the registration form to the division by fax or mail.

Basic Indexing Table Layout for Sample Database: ACON

NC Division of Archives and History:
February, 1996

Table Name: **Contacts**
Notes: Native format is Microsoft Access 2.0. Data derived from table definitions.

Field Names	**Field Descriptions**
CID	Contact ID (unique to database)
MailLabel	Mailing label for individual or group
Pfx	Personal Title (e.g., "Ms.", "Mr. & Mrs.") (optional)
Person	Familiar Name (e.g. , "Buzz", "Jo Ann", "Bill and Virginia") (optional)
AlphaName	Last/Group Name (e.g., "Smith", "Smith & Wesson")
Soundex	Soundex Code (derived from AlphaName) (optional)
SortName	Look-up Name (e.g., "Smith, John")
City	City (derived from MailLabel)
ST	Two-character State code
Zip	Zip Code (5 or 9 digits) (optional)
Bphone	Business telephone (optional)
Ext	Phone extension (optional)
Fax	Fax telephone (optional)
Hphone	Home telephone (optional)
Courier	State of NC Courier Code (optional)
VendNum	Vendor Code (optional)
Internet	Internet address (optional)
Note	Note (searchable) (optional)
Stamp	Date Stamp—date entry made or last updated (IntFmt)